

# Build \$ Savers

Consumer Protection Building Experts

## THE HOME BUILDING CONSUMER KNOWLEDGE TEST

We exist because consumer complaints against builders is the Number 1 biggest complaint area in fair trading and consumer affairs. Our free service allows consumers to cross check what they are intending to build and avoid the costly extra variation costs many consumers experience after they sign and pay a deposit to a builder.

**25 questions you should know  
before signing any builders  
paperwork or having designs  
drawn with any home designer,  
architect or builder.**



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Adelaide - Brisbane - Melbourne - Perth - Sydney

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It is quite possible, probable even, that as a member of the general public dealing with the building industry, “you don’t know what you don’t know.” **BUILDSAVERS** are experts that know the industry. We can protect you from making expensive mistakes when dealing with builders on your own.

So, to see if we can genuinely help, we have created a short little ‘test’. See if you know some of these typical building issues or terms.

## - THE TEST -

- QUESTION 1** What do the letters “PS” means when a builder/salesperson puts it alongside a dollar figure on your initial building quote, prior to you paying a deposit and initial preliminary sign up?
- QUESTION 2** Does the meaning of this “PS” change when it is alongside a dollar amount item (or items) stated in the final legally binding building contract the builder gives you to sign?
- QUESTION 3** What do the letters “PC” means when placed against an item or items within the specification items of any building quote?
- QUESTION 4** When a builder has a “PC” item and dollar amount attached to it, do all builders have to have the same dollar amount stated for that same item?
- QUESTION 5** You see a home advertised as 200sq/mts, you see another advertised as 190sq/mts. Which is the bigger home? Don’t be caught buying a home YOU THINK is bigger when it is actually smaller. This is a potentially huge trap and you need to know how to pick this up. This example could cost you close to \$10,000 if you don’t don’t understand the implications.
- In this example if the 190 sq/mt home was measured using the same DIMENSION TECHNIQUE as the 200sq/mt home then the 190sq/mt home is ACTUALLY 208 sq/mts – a bigger home.
- QUESTION 6** Why, when you sign your building contract, are the plans on a scale of 1-100, (1 cm = 1 m), yet when you get a colour brochure or look at new home guides in the press or internet, the scales are all different and many have no scale at all? How do you compare them?
- QUESTION 7** What does Copyright (©) mean? Most consumers don’t understand this issue. If you give a builder/designer/architect your ideas to add to their copyright plan and they draw them for you, who then owns the copyright? You might naturally assume you still own the ideas you gave them, however, this is not necessarily true. What would happen if you want to add some of your ideas to another builders/designers plan because you want to change builder? Basically, you can’t. Infringing copyright can be very costly and builders/designers/architects have a right to protect works they complete for you when requested by you. However if you insist on owning the copyright, it gives you the ability to get as many comparative building quotes as you like in order to get the best price. When a builder owns the Copyright of the plans you have little, if no power, to negotiate and can end up paying too much. When you own the Copyright you have full control and several builders you choose having to bid hard against each other to win your business.
- QUESTION 8** If you sign a pre contract agreement and pay a deposit, how many days does the builder have to fix the building price before they could charge you with a “price rise” prior to supplying you with the final building contract? Are the days counted as business days or is it ‘every’ day?
- QUESTION 9** Garages – if you look in the new home guides in the weekend press and on the internet, some builders have a dimension for the garage size and others do not. Why is that? Why are all the room dimensions stated for the house but not the garage dimensions?
- QUESTION 10** If two builders’ provide room dimensions on a design plan, both 4.20m x 3.8m, will both rooms end up being identical in size?
- QUESTION 11** If a builder writes in the quote “vanities to bathroom and ensuite are included” does that mean you get vanity cupboards included under the vanity tops?
- QUESTION 12** Do all the builders use the same building contract?

**QUESTION 13** What does “piling” mean? Could this cost be avoided and how?

**QUESTION 14** What does “headworks” mean? Does this cost apply to every block?

**QUESTION 15** What does “timber set” mean? Would every block require this?

**QUESTION 16** What is an “easement”? What is the name of the works you may be required to pay to build into an easement?

**QUESTION 17** What does “materials handling fee” mean? Could you avoid this fee?

**QUESTION 18** What does “site access fee” mean? What could you do to delete this fee?

**QUESTION 19** What does “site set out fee” mean? What does it mean if your builder says he has to “re-peg” plus in addition charge a “site set out fee”?

**QUESTION 20** What does “Sub Soil Drains” mean? Why would a block require this?

**QUESTION 21** What does “Wind Rating” mean? What items would need to be changed?

**QUESTION 22** What is the maximum deposit % by law a builder can ask you to pay?

**QUESTION 23** If a builder refers you to an architect or building designer WHO will own the (C) Copyright of your plans? You must always own the (C) Copyright so you can shop several builders to obtain a competitive price on your building plans

**QUESTION 24** If an architect or building designer draws your plans and then they recommend builders to you they know are those builders only being recommended by them because those builders supply that architect or building designer with other design work?

These are just a few of the questions that you may come across, and there are so many more. Perhaps now you can see why so many consumers end up paying more than they should. It’s confusing. But with someone at your side, who has the experience to navigate you through the building obstacle course, it can become a much less painful, dare we say enjoyable, experience!

If you have struggled to answer any of the questions above, you must call us. Not knowing “what you don’t know” will cost you money and lost opportunity. It may mean you end up with a bigger mortgage or cash outlay that you could have avoided. But we can help you and our service is free to consumers and investors.

**QUESTION 25** If you have one job to build when BUILDSAVERS having a volume of jobs to negotiate with top quality builders every month - who do you believe would be able to negotiate and get by far a better building price? **YOU or BUILDSAVERS?**



BUILDSAVERS can help you navigate a successful path throughout the buying and building process – and we can make sure you get the best possible top quality building price.

Should you build with a builder we recommend BUILDSAVERS will stay on board with you throughout the entire construction process to make sure you receive a quality and great customer building experience.

## Build \$avers

**1300 403 180 - 8am to 8pm 7 days**

**buildsavers.com.au**



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